

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 STOCKH 02360 290747Z

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R 281506Z APR 76  
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7496  
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UNCLAS STOCKHOLM 2360

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP, SW

SUBJECT: POST RELATIONSHIPS WITH AMERICAN CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE

REF: STATE 94266

1. OFFICERS HERE HAVE OFTEN INFORMALLY BROACHED THE SUBJECT OF ESTABLISHING AN AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE WITH MEMBERS OF THE US BUSINESS COMMUNITY IN SWEDEN. THE POST HAS ON NUMEROUS OCCASIONS OFFERED INTERESTED BUSINESSMEN ITS ASSISTANCE IN THE EVENT THEY UNDERTAKE TO FORM A CHAMBER. AS THE DEPARTMENT MAY BE AWARE, THE US CHAMBER SENT A HIGH LEVEL DELEGATION TO SWEDEN IN LATE 1974, AND ON THAT OCCASION THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE DISCUSSION OF THE POSSIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING AN AMERICAN CHAMBER HERE. EFFORTS BY EMBASSY OFFICERS AND THE FEW INTERESTED AMERICAN BUSINESSMEN TO SUSTAIN THESE DISCUSSIONS WITHIN THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY WERE SUBSTANTIALLY UNSUCCESSFUL. ONLY A COUPLE OF AMERICAN BUSINESSMEN DEMONSTRATED ANY ACTIVE INTEREST, AND BEGAN TO PROMOTE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A CHAMBER AMONG THEIR COLLEAGUES. THE POST PROVIDED THEM WITH BACKGROUND MATERIALS, INCLUDING A SAMPLE CHARTER. THESE BUSINESSMEN HAVE SINCE DEPARTED STOCKHOLM AND NO OTHER BUSINESSMEN HAVE SHOWN INTEREST IN TAKING UP WHERE THEY LEFT OFF.

2. WE HAVE TAKEN THIS OPPORTUNITY TO INQUIRE WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE US BUSINESS COMMUNITY TO REVIEW ONCE MORE ANY  
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PAGE 02 STOCKH 02360 290747Z

NASCENT INTEREST THERE MAY NOW BE IN ESTABLISHING A CHAMBER.

IT IS OUR CONCLUSION THAT SENTIMENTS WITHIN THE US BUSINESS COMMUNITY HAVE NOT CHANGED SUBSTANTIALLY IN THIS REGARD. THE CONSENSUS SEEMS TO BE THAT THE BUSINESS REASONS FOR ESTABLISHING A CHAMBER ARE NOT PRESENT. MOST MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY BELIEVE THAT A) THE AMERICAN CLUB PROVIDES SUFFICIENT OCCASION FOR REPRESENTATIVES OF AMERICAN FIRMS TO EXCHANGE VIEWS ON SUBJECTS OF MUTUAL INTEREST; B) THERE IS LITTLE TO BE GAINED IN CREATING A "HIGHER PROFILE" FOR THE AMERICAN BUSINESS COMMUNITY THAT ESTABLISHING A CHAMBER WOULD IMPLY; AND C) THE SERVICES WHICH A CHAMBER COULD OFFER ARE ALREADY WELL PROVIDED BY OTHER ORGANIATIONS, INCLUDING THE US TRADE CENTER.

3. THERE ARE A NUMBER OF OTHER UNDERLYING REASONS WHICH WE BELIEVE MILITATE AGAINST THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN AMERICAN CHAMBER HERE. THE TURNOVER IN AMERICAN MANAGERS OF US FIRMS HERE IS RATHER RAPID, AND SWEDISH MANAGERS OF US FIRMS RARELY APPRECIATE THE BENEFITS THAT CHAMBER MEMBERSHIP COULD AFFORD THEM. MOST OF THE LARGER AMERICAN FIRMS REPRESENTED HERE ARE ALSO AREA OFFICES, RESPONSIBLE FOR COMPANY ACTIVITIES THROUGHOUT SCANDINAVIA. MANAGERS OF THESE FIRMS, WHICH ARE BETTER ABLE TO AFFORD THE EXPENSE OF CHAMBER MEMBERSHIP, RELATE MORE TO BROADER REGIONAL ISSUES RATHER THAN THE SPECIFIC PROBLEMS OF OPERATING IN SWEDEN. FINALLY, AS ONE AMERICAN BUSINESSMAN APTLY PUT IT, SWEDEN'S ECONOMY IS EXTRAORDINARILY WELL-PLANNED, AND BUSINESS/LABOR/GOVERNMENT RELATIONS ARE SO CAREFULLY CHOREOGRAPHED THAT AN AMERICAN CHAMBER WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO INFLUENCE ISSUES IMPORTANT TO ITS MEMBERS IN ANY SIGNIFICANT WAY.  
JOHNSON

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